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NEWS ANALYSIS

Infor Invests in AI, Automation, Platforms, and Marketplaces With Infor OS

Platforms Take Center Stage in a Post-AI Era of
ERP Modernization

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RESEARCH

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After a hiatus of in-person events, Infor brought key customers, partners, and market influencers to New Orleans, Louisiana, at Infor Now to showcase the enterprise software vendor's progress and investment in its core technology. At this October 2023 event, early-adopter customers showed how Infor OS delivered demonstrable return on investment (ROI) in bringing artificial intelligence (AI), platforms, marketplaces, and automation to its customers.

As customers seek modernization options for their enterprise resource planning (ERP), many considering an upgrade from existing Infor products as well as prospects within key Infor industries considering a replacement should take a closer look at the Infor offering. Constellation believes that a rigorous platform offering will play a key role in digital transformation and AI enablement. The data points from customer conversations, partner interviews, and Infor's release schedule and roadmap all point to a positive direction for customers and prospects.

BUSINESS THEMES

New C-Suite   Data to Decisions   Future of Work   Technology Optimization

INFOR NOW DEMONSTRATES PROGRESS IN PLATFORMS

At the Infor Now event on October 4, 2023, the enterprise software vendor unveiled a vision to deliver on an integrated platform, composable processes, and automation. Infor's Industry Cloud strategy has been built on an AWS cloud infrastructure for infrastructure as a service (IaaS), a cloud platform for platform as a service (PaaS), and enterprise applications for software as a service (SaaS). Existing customers and new-prospective CIOs seek relief from legacy application ownership issues including complex integrations, multicloud management, high complexity in maintenance, and growing security challenges.

Over the past five years, Infor has been actively investing in its core platform, delivering on single sign-on, integration and APIs, data management, analytics and insights, and machine learning (see Figure 1). These platforms provide a key catalyst for modernization, agility, and automation.

Figure 1. Infor's Platform Vision Addresses Key Customer Pain Points
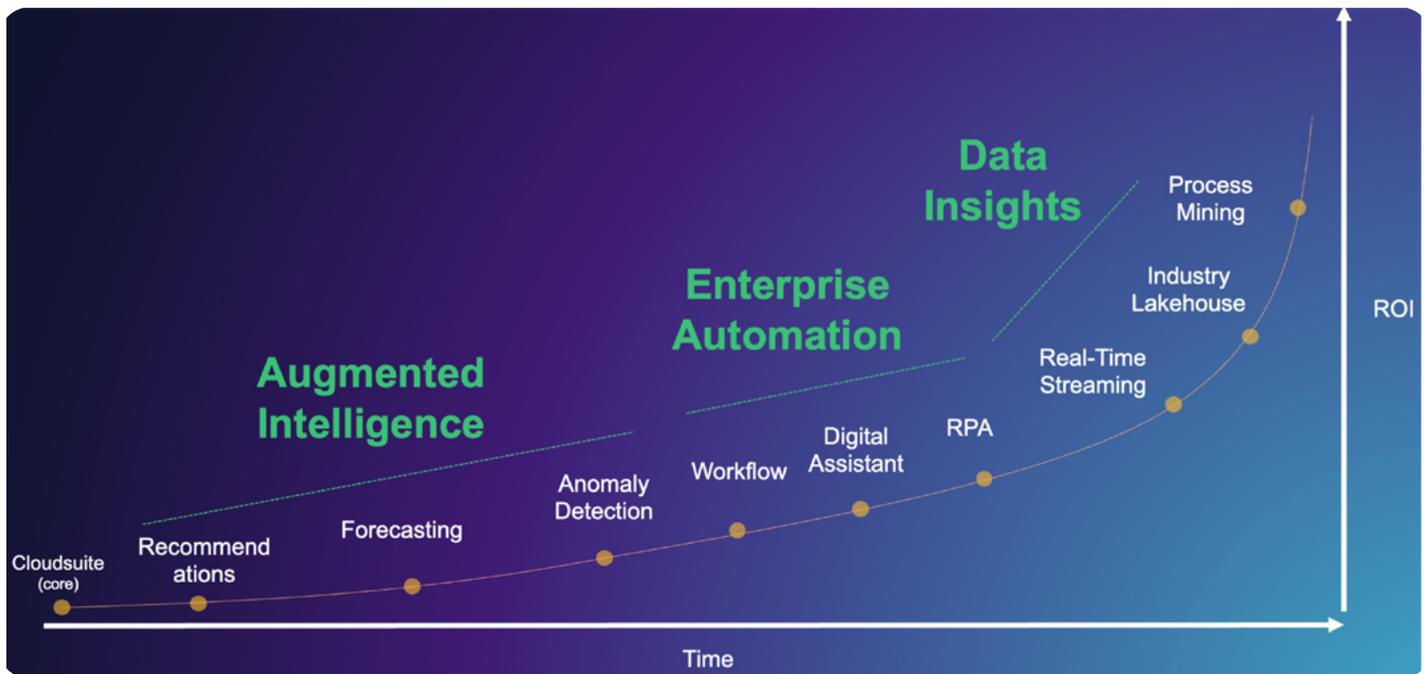

Source: Infor

INNOVATION JOURNEY SEEKS END STATE OF DATA INSIGHTS

Infor's journey to the cloud provided customers with a long-term path to analytics, automation, and AI. These three A's power decision velocity—or the ability to quickly make more-accurate and more-precise business decisions including setting pricing, predicting demand, understanding staffing levels, preparing for currency risks, addressing new product introduction, streamlining procurement, and reducing costs. The latest announcements focused on three areas of AI, automation, and data insights (see Figure 2).

Advancements in AI Start With Augmented Intelligence

Infor's augmented intelligence offering, Infor Augmented Intelligence Service, provides a turnkey approach to AI. Users will find out-of-the box integration, data management, and machine learning models. Instead of generic use cases, Infor also provides industry-specific models and augmented

Figure 2. Infor Moves From Augmented Intelligence to Data Insights

Source: Infor

intelligence templates that are tuned to improve results. The overall offering comes with a data science platform, industry models, and access to key AI resources.

Enterprise Automation Builds on Domain Expertise

With the new release of Infor Robotic Process Automation, Infor supports three types of automation, including decision automation, system-centric automation, and labor-centric automation (see Figure 3). Infor now delivers a complete 360-degree automation platform in a single low-code experience that opens up unlimited automation use cases for the enterprise. Key use cases include invoice processing, compliance checklist, proof of delivery, customer creation workflow, and persona-based workspaces.

Data Insights Prepare Organizations for Enterprise AI

Infor provides customers with their own cloud account, and the ability to stream data to Customer Cloud account, Infor Managed DWaaS, and Infor Insights. With the data-warehouse-as-a-service

Figure 3. Inside Infor's Automation Strategy
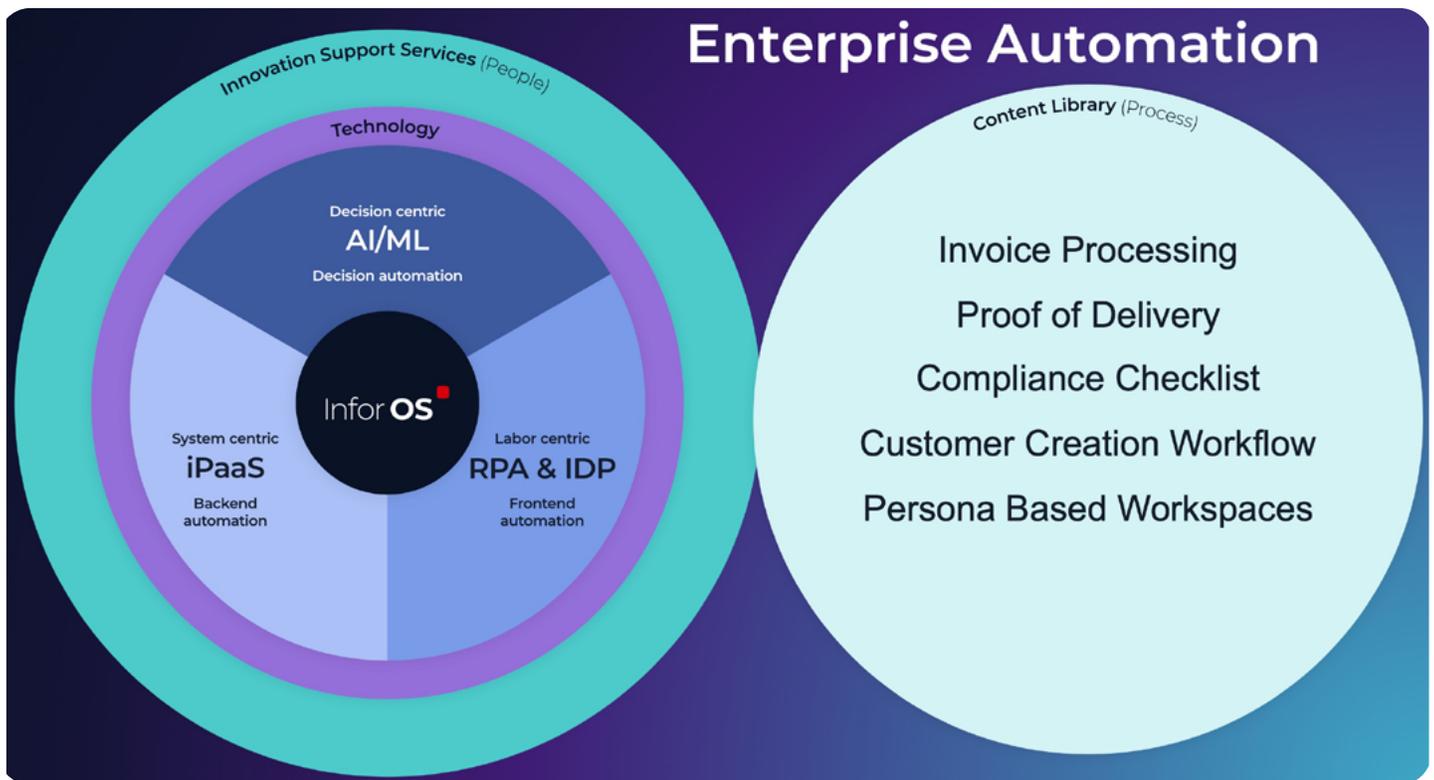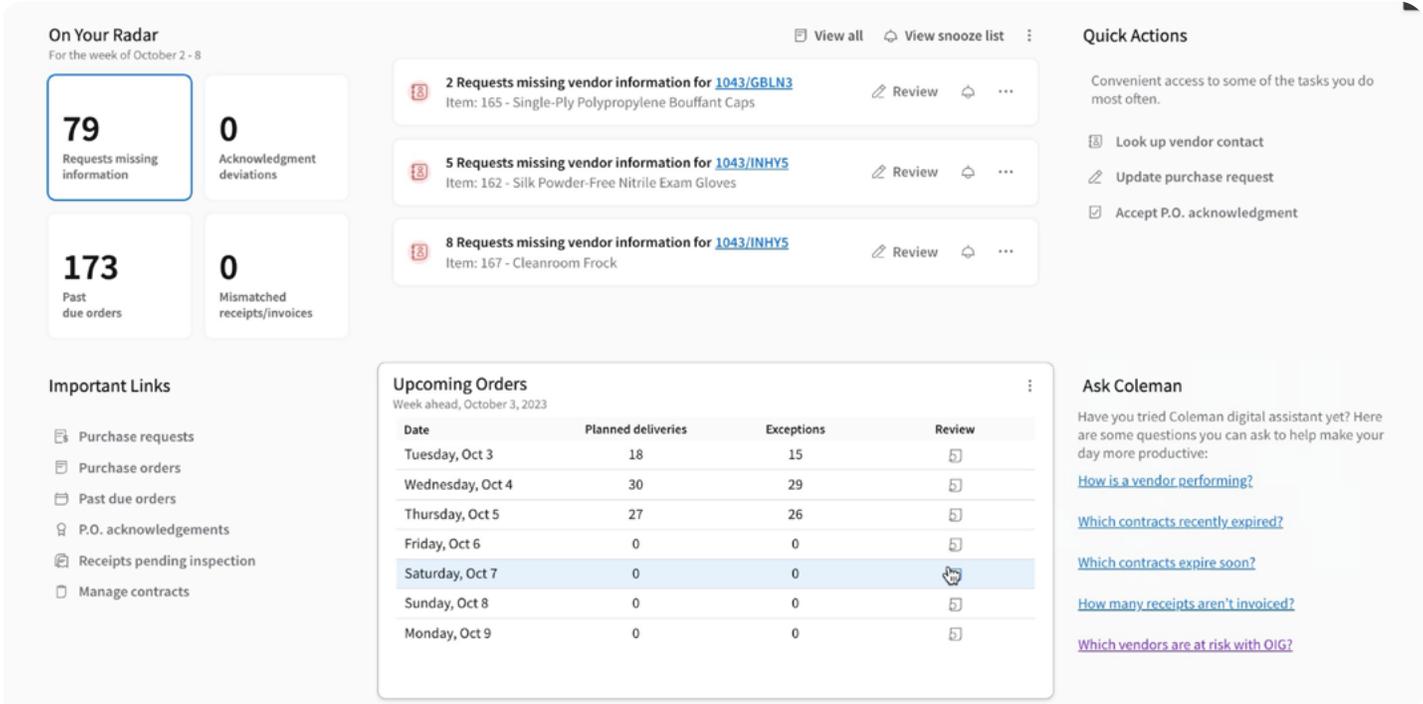

Source: Infor

(DWaaS) offering and Infor Insights, customers have access to their own data pipelines and lakehouse. Infor Insights adds business intelligence (BI) and reporting to support analytics and financial planning and analysis (FP&A). As part of the automation capabilities, Infor provides a process intelligence (PI) offering that enables business process composition, optimization, and automation (see Figure 4). The result: BI, PI, and AI are all in one place for users, making it easier to achieve machine-scale analytics, automation, and AI.

DEVELOPER PORTAL AND PROGRAM COMPLEMENTS INFOR MARKETPLACE

Infor Marketplace provides a listing of Infor and partner solutions and services. Future capabilities include provisioning and ecommerce capabilities.

Inside Infor Marketplace, Infor enhances two new PaaS offerings—Infor Mongoose and Infor OS Application Designer. Customers using Infor Mongoose can take advantage of a no-code/low-code/

Figure 4. Infor Delivers Pragmatic Process Intelligence Combined With Automation

Source: Infor

full-code experience. This rapid application development framework allows customers to design, build, and deploy solutions in the platform and take advantage of Infor's flex layout, HTML 5, and user components.

As part of the Infor OS Portal platform, Infor OS Application Designer gives users a serverless, multitenant, cloud-based development framework. This no-code capability enables users to build widgets for Infor OS Portal based on predefined templates that can be connected to a data service.

To aid customers and partners in their innovation journey, Infor also released the Developer Portal with over 50 detailed tutorials, a complete API documentation library and best practices for leveraging the Infor OS platform to tackle any number of use cases around integration, automation, intelligence and experience.

THE BOTTOM LINE: INFOR OS PROVIDES A PRAGMATIC ROADMAP FOR MODERNIZATION AND A PATH TO AI

Every ERP vendor seeks to modernize its ERP platforms for an age of AI. As Infor takes existing customers into the cloud and onto the Infor OS platform, Constellation believes those customers will immediately benefit from the investment in the platform. Unlike other ERP vendors that have spent decades talking about innovation and delivering very little for their customers, Infor has an investment roadmap that includes many capabilities available today to all customers and prospects.

Based on dozens of conversations with early adopters, Constellation believes that Infor's customers have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to achieve gains in operational efficiency and modernization. With Infor's own dedicated and competent product and engineering team, customers and prospects should not only feel comfortable with what's available today but also should be confident that Infor's Marketplace will provide innovations from the ecosystem.

ANALYST BIO

R "Ray" Wang

Founder and Principal Analyst

R "Ray" Wang is founder, chairman, and principal analyst of Constellation Research Inc. and the author of the popular enterprise software blog A Software Insider's Point of View. He previously was a founding partner and research analyst for enterprise strategy at Altimeter Group.

A background in emerging business and technology trends, enterprise apps strategy, technology selection, and contract negotiations enables Wang to provide clients and readers with the bridge between business leadership and technology adoption. Wang has been recognized by the prestigious Institute of Industry Analyst Relations (IIAR) as Analyst of the Year, and in 2009 he was recognized as one of the most important analysts for enterprise, SMB, and software. In 2010 Wang was recognized on the ARInsights Power 100 List of Industry Analysts and named one of the top influential leaders in the CRM Magazine Market Awards.

Wang graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a B.A. in natural sciences and public health. His graduate training includes a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University in health policy and management and health finance and management.

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ABOUT CONSTELLATION RESEARCH

Constellation Research is an award-winning, Silicon Valley—based research and advisory firm that helps organizations navigate the challenges of digital disruption through business model transformation and the judicious application of disruptive technologies. Unlike the legacy analyst firms, Constellation Research is disrupting how research is accessed, what topics are covered, and how clients can partner with a research firm to achieve success. Over 350 clients have joined from an ecosystem of buyers, partners, solution providers, C-suite, boards of directors, and vendor clients. Our mission is to identify, validate, and share insights with our clients.

Organizational Highlights

· Named Institute of Industry Analyst Relations (IIAR) New Analyst Firm of the Year in 2011 and #1 Independent Analyst Firm for 2014 and 2015.
· Experienced research team with an average of 25 years of practitioner, management, and industry experience.
· Organizers of the Constellation Connected Enterprise—an innovation summit and best practices knowledge-sharing retreat for business leaders.
· Founders of Constellation Executive Network, a membership organization for digital leaders seeking to learn from market leaders and fast followers.

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